Australian Bureau of Statistics

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Over half adult migrants arrive with qualifications

Over half of the migrants who arrive in Australia as adults do so with a post-school qualification, according to figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) today. However, the lower the level of the qualification, the less likely it is to be recognised in Australia.

The November 1999 survey, which looked at migrants who had arrived in Australia after 1980 and were aged 18 years or over on arrival, found that more than half (55 per cent) came with a post-school qualification. Of these, approximately one third (35 per cent) had a skilled or basic vocational qualification, and a further third (34 per cent) had a bachelor degree. However, less than half (48 per cent) of those with a skilled or basic vocational qualification had it recognised in Australia. Conversely, over three quarters (77 per cent) of those with a higher degree received recognition, as did nearly two thirds (63 per cent) of those with a post-graduate diploma, and over half (56 percent) of those with a bachelor degree.

Migrants from the Oceania region and those from Europe and the former USSR were more likely to have had their qualification recognised in Australia (61 per cent each). In comparison, less than one third (30 per cent) of migrants from the Southeast Asian region with a post-school qualification had their qualification recognised.

In November 1999, there were 1,163,600 migrants who had arrived in Australia after 1980 and were aged 18 years or over on arrival. Of these, 749,000 were employed (77 per cent of males and 52 per cent of females), with 22 per cent working as professionals. A further 25 per cent of employed females were working as intermediate clerical, sales and service workers, and 22 per cent of employed males were tradesmen or related workers.

While the overall unemployment rate among migrants was 6.8 per cent, marginally higher than the rate for people born in Australia (6.4 per cent), female migrants faced higher unemployment rates than males (8.1 per cent and 5.8 per cent respectively).

Almost one third (30 per cent) of migrants (who had arrived in Australia after 1980 and were aged 18 years or over on arrival) were born in Europe and the former USSR. A further 18 per cent were born in Southeast Asia, 18 per cent in Oceania and 12 per cent in Northeast Asia.

Further details can be found in **Labour Force Status and Other Characteristics of Migrants, Australia, November 1999** (cat. no. 6250.0) available from ABS bookshops. The summary of the publication is available on this site. If you wish to purchase a copy of this publication, contact the ABS Bookshop in your capital city.

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